

NOVENA

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FOR

DECEMBER

25th

CHRIST'S
BIRTHDAY

A. O. BILLIMEK, C.S.S.R.

*Novena for
December 25th
Christ's Birthday*



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Christ's Birthday

REV. A. O. BILLIMEK, C.SS.R.

INTRODUCTION

Christmas is Christ's Birthday. He should be the center of all Christmas celebrations. Too often this is not true, and we find many people forgetting that Christ is the One to be honored on Christmas. People are so busy in the mad rush of buying gifts, busy decorating the inside and the outside of the house, even busy wondering what gifts they will get, that the real meaning of Christmas is almost completely lost in care, greed, and selfishness.

Some one very wisely started the saying "Put Christ back into Christmas" so people would remember what this holy and exciting season is all about. To help this cause we were asked to buy only those Christmas cards on which there was a Christ-like thought. This was and is a very good idea, and it is further heartening to see how the campaign is growing year after year.

But you and I should do more than this. We should take a personal interest in Christ's Birthday by being sure that Christ is in our own hearts. To do this we need some special preparation. This little novena booklet is meant to fill this personal need. The prayers were culled from the writings of St. Alphonsus Liguori, whose personal love for the Infant Redeemer inspired these prayers. The prayers are addressed to the Infant Redeemer and are requests for some of the virtues we have so much need of in our daily lives. The language is simple, so that all can understand every word. We feel that all will find these prayers to their liking.

The prayers are arranged for the nine days before Christmas, December 16th to 24th. They may be used privately or publicly. They are recommended especially for the children in our schools.

There is a special set of four prayers in the booklet which may be used at the time of a public parish novena in which a sermon may be preached each day and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament be given.

We sincerely hope that this novena booklet will help you to keep Christ close to your heart on His Birthday. And may it help you to give Him a real Birthday gift: your own heart full of the virtues you here ask for, not only on His Birthday, but all during the year.

These prayers may be used privately for the 9 days preceding Christmas as your own novena prayers, or they may be used in public for congregational praying. In public, pause at the asterisk.

FOR FORGIVENESS

My Infant Redeemer, * I should be
ashamed of my many sins. * I know why
You came into the world. * You came to
make up for my sins. * Now, when I die,
* I can get to Heaven * because You lived
and died for me. * There is something I
must do * to get to Heaven * and that is
to ask Your forgiveness. * I am ashamed
of my many sins. * Hurry and come * so
I can ask Your forgiveness. * I feel so
badly * because when You grow up, You
will have so much to suffer * just to pay
off the debts on my sins. * More than
that, * I know just what pains You are
going to have. * Long before You came
into the world, * Holy men told us of
Your pains and hurts. * There will be the
mean whipping * by the strong soldiers *
and all because of the sins of impurity. *
There will be a crown of thorns for Your
Sacred Head * to make up for my sins
of thought. * Then they will put on You
* an old torn purple coat * just to make
fun of You, * because I am so proud *
and think I am better than anyone else. *
Now I am so ashamed of myself * be-
cause I have hurt You so many times. *

To be honest and fair * You could have sent me to hell * each time I committed a mortal sin. * I am a mean sinner * and it is going to cost all Your blood * to buy me back from the devil * and save me from hell. * My Infant Jesus, * I know You will do it. * How You must want my love. * Before I live another minute, * please forgive me. * Please believe me when I say, * “I am sorry.” * I *do* want to love you. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

V. Come, My Infant Jesus, and be born in my heart.

R. Give me but Thy love and Grace, and I am rich enough.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who did reveal Yourself to little ones, grant, we pray You, that we may honor meekly the holy mysteries of Your Son, the Child Jesus. Let us follow him humbly in our lives, so that we may reach Heaven, which was promised by You to those who become as little ones. Through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

FOR OBEDIENCE

“Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with thy whole heart.” Mt 22:37 My Infant Redeemer, * I believe You have given me * this command * for my good. * Because You have commanded me to Love You, * I will gladly obey You * and love You with all my heart. * It is only too true * that in the past * I have failed You badly. * I did not obey You. * I did just what I wanted to do. * Now I know this did not please You. * My Infant Saviour, * let me learn how to obey * from the way You obeyed Your Heavenly Father * Your Mother, * and St. Joseph. * You loved me so much * that You were willing to live * in a poor human body like mine. * You obeyed Your Heavenly Father * in making up for my many sins. * It seems to me * that You almost went too far * just to show me how to love and obey. * Soon You will be born again * in that poor stable * —a simple place made for cows, * for horses, and sheep. * My Infant Jesus, * open my eyes * so I can see all of Your obedience * and then spend my life trying to do everything * just like You. * For me

Your Holy Will is * to love You with all my heart. * In this above everything else * I want to obey You. * Help me to obey also * all those I should obey in my life * — my parents, * my teachers in school, * the priest in church who hears my confession, * and all who have charge over me * wherever I may be. * I want to obey * because You want me to obey. * Please hurry, come into the world, * My Infant Redeemer, and help me. * I need You so. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR SUFFERERS

My Infant Redeemer, * You are coming down from Heaven * to give Yourself to me * I want to have only You, * just You, my Only Treasure. * I ask You now * to be the Only King of my poor heart. * Let me always obey You. * Let me always please You. * Let others try to make money * and let them enjoy it. * Let them have all the fun * and pleasure they can find, * morning, noon and night. * I want to have only You * and to

please You alone. * You gave Yourself to
bring me hope, * happiness, and Heaven.
* In return I offer all of myself to You. *
Do with me whatever You will. * I know
there are thousands and thousands * of
poor men, women and children, * who
must suffer * and suffer very much. *
Please help them to be strong * and to
be brave in their pains. * They are “vic-
tim souls” * for Your honor and glory, *
just as You were a “Victim” * giving up
Your life to get me into Heaven. * My
Infant Jesus * I offer You now * all the
sufferings and crosses * You may ask me
to carry during my life. * If You want it
that way, * so do I. * But I am afraid *
that I might not be brave and strong like
You. * Help me become brave and strong
for You. * I love You My Infant Jesus. *
I am truly sorry for all my sins. * Take
me to Yourself * now and forever. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR HUMILITY

My Infant Redeemer, * only You Who are God, * could show so much love for me * a poor and sinful child. * Even though my sins are many * and very great, * I will not give up thinking * that You will still be good to me. * Please let my sins make me more humble * every single time * anyone hurts my feelings. * I have richly deserved * many other hurts * because I had the awful boldness * to sin against You, My God. * You know better than anybody else * how proud I am * and how much I need to be humbled. * Let me learn from You * the great lesson of how to be humble. * You gave that lesson * by coming down from highest Heaven * just for me. * You are going to take * our poor way of living here on earth * to show me how to live. * Help me to learn the lesson * You are trying to teach me. * My sins have earned punishments. * So when crosses come to me in life, * let me carry them humbly * and as a very just punishment. * You know I should do penance, My Gentle Infant Jesus, * because I have not been humble, * I have hurt You. * I have

sinned so much. * I have sinned so much by my pride; * thinking I am better than everyone else; * that I never need anyone's help. * Help me now * to love You all the more. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations as on page 7.

FOR FAVORS RECEIVED

My Infant Redeemer, * when shall I begin * to see how good you are to me. * When shall I begin to pay back Your Love * by giving all of my love to You. * I have often done * many things that were wrong. * In doing these, * I have sinned against You. * This seems to be the way * I have paid back Your Goodness to me. * When I look at myself * and see the many good things that I have, * I am ashamed of myself. * I have eyes to see Your Beauty around me; * to see the flowers, * trees and sky so blue. * I have ears to hear * the kind and warm voices of friends * and pretty music that I love. * I have a mind with which I can learn * to know You and love You. * And yet, I have neither loved * nor

served You * half as well as I should. *
You gave me the Holy Gift of Faith, *
even before I knew * what a priceless
Gift it was. * But I have this Gift * and
still I do not really know how much it
means to me. * My Infant Jesus, * now
that I know better, * I want to start
thanking You * with all my heart. * Soon
again You will come into the world * and
teach me again how to live. * For that I
owe You more thanks * Please take my
heart, * please take my thanks. * Show
me how to be truly sorry * for not thank-
ing You before. * I now promise * that
I will never again fail You. * I do love
You, * My Infant Redeemer, * with all
my heart, * now and forever. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR HELP THROUGH USE OF THE HOLY NAME

Your name, * My Infant Redeemer, *
sounds strange to some people * because
they do not love You. * Since You have
already given * Your life and blood for
me, * I pray that You now write * Your

Adorable Name "Jesus" * on my poor heart. * If I have It always * stamped on my heart, * I may also have It * always on my lips * to call on Your Name * in all my needs. * If the devil tempts me to sin, * Your Name will give me power * to say "No". * If I lose hope, * Your Name will make my hope grow strong again. * If I must carry my share of crosses, * Your Name will help me to remember * all that You have suffered for me. * If I find that my love * is not strong enough, * Your Name will stir it up * by reminding me * of the great love * that You have for me. * Up until now * I have fallen into many many sins, * because I did not * call on Your Name for help. * From now on * with Your Name in my heart * and on my lips, * I shall be stronger * in all my temptations * and in all my troubles, and sorrows. * I want to be good * and stay good just for You, * because I love You. * This is how I hope to live: * this is how I hope to die, * having Your Holy Name in my heart * and on my lips. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR LOVE OF GOD

My Infant Redeemer, * soon again
You will be born into the world. * I want
to get ready for Your coming. * When I
look at myself * I see many things * that
will not please You. * When You look at
me * You see only a little love in me *
but many sins. * Because You see my
sins * tell me what I can do * so that
You will forgive me. * I myself will do
whatever You ask, * to have You forgive
me. * I am sorry for all the sins I have
committed. * As to my love for You, *
My Infant Jesus, * it is much too weak
* and oh, so cold. * Please give me a
great desire * to love You * and only
You. * I feel a great need * to love You
with a burning love. * It is only right *
that I, who have sinned so much, *
should now love You all the more. *
Keep reminding me always * of the Love
You have, * and have had for me, * so
that my soul * may always burn with love
for You. * I know this will please You. *
I want my soul * to think of You only, *
to desire You only, * and to try to please
You only. * O God of love, * I, who once
did the sins * the devil asked me to do, *

I now give myself all to You, * to do only what You tell me to do. * In Your mercy, take me * and hold me with Your love, * from this day on. * I shall love You in life, * and shall die loving only You. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR DEVOTION TO MARY

My Infant Redeemer, * You have thought of everything. * Not only did You come to the world Yourself, * to be my Father and my Brother; * but You chose a very good and loving Mother, * and then You gave her to me * to be my Mother too. * I thank You for her. * You alone know how many times in my life * I will need a Mother * like the Blessed Virgin Mary. * I like to hear the gospel story * which tells about You and Mary * being at the Wedding in Cana. * The wine was all gone * before the wedding party was half over. * Mary just told You about it, My Infant Jesus, * and You made more wine. * That wine was the best in the world. * Great and Holy men

have said * that if I look up to Mary as
my Mother, * and try, to be good as she
was * and every day of my life * say
some prayers, like the rosary, * the Hail
Holy Queen, * or three Hail Marys every
morning and every night * in honor of
her purity * it is a sure sign * that when
I die * I will get to Heaven. * Mary, my
Mother, will see to it * that I get there. *
So My Infant Redeemer, * I am now go-
ing to put myself * into the hands of the
Blessed Virgin Mary. * She is my Mother
* and I know she cannot turn me down. *
But I am so ashamed of my many sins. *
Somebody has called her the “Refuge of
Sinners.” * So I come to Mary, * “The
Refuge of Sinners” * and ask her to take
my poor sinful heart * and give it all
clean and pure * to You My Infant Jesus.
* I know, My Infant Jesus, * that if Mary
gives You my heart, * You cannot say
“No.” * Then please, Blessed Mother, *
give Him my heart today, * take good
care and see * that Jesus will love me *
and make me good * so I can love both
Jesus and You forever. * I love You too,
my dear Mother, * never let me change.
Amen.

3 *Hail Marys*

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

FOR LASTING LOVE

O Heavenly Father, * You cannot say
“No” * when Your Own Divine Son asks
You for a favor. * Listen then. * On this
very night of His birth * He will ask You
to forgive me * and not punish me. * I
know that because of my many sins * I
should have been put in hell * as a fair
punishment. * But please, Heavenly Fa-
ther, * look at the tears of Your Son. *
Surely His tears can count for me * if
only You will take them * He is coming
down to earth * to show me how I can
save my soul. * This is the night * all
the world has been waiting for * — the
Birthday of Our Redeemer. * Now I shall
have a chance to save my soul: * now
at last my many sins can be forgiven. *
My Infant Jesus, on this night of Your
Birth, * I feel that You will give us *
many and great blessings. * I shall dare
to ask for one very great grace * — the
grace always to love You and serve You.
* The hour draws closer and closer *

when You will be born into the world. *
When I am at Your feet, * as I now am,
* make my heart grow warm * with a
real holy * and lasting love for You. *
Tie me to Yourself so well * that I will
never again leave You * for anybody *
or anything in the whole world. * I love
You, My Infant Redeemer. * You be-
came an Infant * just to win my love. *
I offer You my heart * and all of its love
* as my Christmas Gift. * Take my heart
and my love, * and keep both forever and
ever. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

The four prayers which follow may be
used privately as your own Novena Prayers,
for the 9 days preceding Christmas,
or they may be used in public for congregational
praying. In public pause at Asterisk.

NO. 1

My Infant Redeemer, * soon we shall
celebrate Your Birthday. * You tried to
win our love * for a long long time. *
But instead of winning our love, * You
lost out * because we loved sin too much.
* Sin is the one thing I can claim * as
my very own. * And I have so many, sins.
* I did not learn very well * what the
Holy men and the Prophets * kept telling
us people in the world * that we should
love and serve You. * Instead I loved sin
more. * You had to become man * in
order to make Yourself loved by me. *
Proud sinner that I am, * I should now
be ashamed to come before You. * My
pride blinded me * and I did not see *
that the many blessings I have * came
from You. * My pride often brings me *
to think of revenge * the minute anybody
hurts my feelings. * Because of my many
sins * I have truly deserved * to be
thrown into hell. * My Infant Jesus, * do
not drive me from Your presence * as I
deserve. * You said You could not help
loving * a heart that is sorry * and that
truly humbles itself: * now I am sorry for
all my sins * committed against You. *

Forgive me, My Infant Jesus; * for I will not offend You anymore. * I want my soul clean and pure * for Your Birthday. * You have to suffer so many hurts for my sake; * so for Your sake * I will bear with all the hurts * that may be offered me * and so pay my just debts. * Give me Your help, * that I may always love You. * I want to bear every insult * for love of You. * Mary, with Your arms around me * show me to Your Son. * Mary ask Him to bless me. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

NO. 2

My Infant Redeemer, * I should not be so bold * as to kneel before Your feet. * I do so only * because You have invited me. * I am the one who has hurt You so much * by my many sins. * I especially caused You * to shed those tears in the stable of Bethlehem. * But You came to the world * to forgive sinners * who are really sorry for their sins. * Please forgive me. * I know how wrong I have been. * From the bottom of my

heart * I am truly sorry. * When I think how good You were * and how much You have loved me, * I know how wrong I have been. * You give great graces and blessings * to so many people during these wonderful days * right before Your Birthday. * Please, My Infant Jesus, * the grace I want most especially * is the grace from today on * to love You with my whole heart. * Also I ask You for this favor * (“Pause a minute in silent prayer. In your heart ask the Infant Redeemer for the special favor for which you are making the novena”).

My Infant Jesus, * please hear my prayer. * First, forgive me my many sins; second, teach me how to love You; * third, let me truly love You always, so that I may never sin again. * My Mother Mary * you can get me all these things by your prayers; * I ask you only this: * pray to Jesus for me. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Versicle and Response with Orations
as on page 7.

My Infant Redeemer, * soon we shall
 once more celebrate Your Birthday. * I
 know the present You are looking for. *
 You are looking for someone to love
 You. * Innocent souls love You and
 thank You * for having kept them from
 the death of sin. * I however must love
 you as a sinner. * I am one who by my
 sins * have earned hell as a fair punish-
 ment, * but You have so often and kindly
 forgiven me * and given Your Grace
 back to me. * I now wish, as much as I
 can, * to make up to You by my love, *
 because I have been so thankless in the
 past. * All the blessings I have from You
 * should have made me very thankful. *
 Over and above all the wonderful things
 * You have given me, * You have made
 me rich * with lights and helps * and
 even invited me to become a saint. * You
 have loved me so very much; * and now,
 overcome by Your love for me, * I can
 no longer hold out. * Now at last I give
 in, * I shall fix all my love on You. Let
 my love for You so shine * that others
 around me will love You too. * On Your
 Birthday * I know what will please You

most: * to have everyone love You * and welcome You with clean and pure hearts. * I am praying that more and more people * all over the world * will love You more this Christmas day * because this is Your Birthday. * All of us want this Birthday * to be the best You ever had. * Mary, My Mother, * help *me* to make it so. Amen.

3 Hail Marys

Priest—The word was made flesh.

People—And dwelt amongst us.

Let Us Pray

O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who did reveal Yourself to little ones, grant, we pray You, that we may honor meekly the holy mysteries of Your Son, the Child Jesus. Let us follow Him humble in our lives, so that we may reach Heaven, which was promised by You to those who become as little ones. Through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord.

People—Amen.

NO. 4

My Infant Redeemer, * who am I that You should have loved me, * and now still continue to love me so much? *

What have You ever received from me *
that has obliged You so to love me? *
The insults, slights, and sins * which I
have given You * would be reason
enough for You to forget about me * and
put me forever from Your face. * My
Lord, I accept every penalty, * but do not
forsake me. * If You forsake me, * I can
nevermore love You. * I have no desire
to escape * the punishment I have de-
served * but I wish to love You * because
I have received from You * so many spe-
cial favors * and so many marks of love.
* I have often turned my back upon You
* for the sake of the pleasure of the
world. * By these sinful pleasures * I
have given up Your grace and Your love.
* Pardon me, My Infant Jesus, * for I
am sorry with my whole heart * for every
single sin and hurt I have given You. *
But it will not be enough to be forgiven. *
I want also the grace to love You * with
a strong everlasting love. * May this Your
Birthday, * be the best ever. * I want
everybody to have You in their hearts. *
That will make this the best Birthday
You ever had. Mary, You are His Moth-
er, * please help us to love Him. Amen.

HYMNS
and
PRAYERS
for
Benediction of the
Most Blessed Sacrament

O SALUTARIS

O Salutaris Hostia,
 Quae coeli pandis ostium,
Bella premunt hostilia
 Da robur; fer auxilium.

Uni Trinoque Domino
 Sit sempiterna gloria
Qui vitam sine termino
 Nobis donet in patria. Amen.

TANTUM ERGO

Tantum ergo Sacramentum,
Veneremur cernui,
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.
Genitori, Genitoque,
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque,
Sit et benedictio
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

Priest—Panem de coelo praestitisti eis;
(Alleluia).

People—Omne delectamentum in se habentem. (Alleluia).

Priest—OREMUS:—Deus, qui nobis sub Sacramento mirabili Passionis tuae memoriam reliquisti; tribue, quaesumus, ita nos Corporis et Sanguinis tui sacra mysteria venerari, ut redemptionis tuae fructum in nobis jugiter sentiamus. Qui visis et regnas in saecula saeculorum.

People—Amen.

THE DIVINE PRAISES

Blessed Be God!

Blessed Be His Holy Name!

Blessed Be Jesus Christ, True God and
True Man!

Blessed Be the Name of Jesus!

Blessed Be His Most Sacred Heart!

Blessed Be Jesus in the Most Holy
Sacrament of the Altar!

Blessed Be the Great Mother of God,
Mary Most Holy!

Blessed Be Her Holy and Immaculate
Conception!

Blessed Be Her Glorious Assumption!

Blessed Be the Name of Mary, Virgin
and Mother!

Blessed Be St. Joseph, Her Most Chaste
Spouse!

Blessed Be God in His Angels and in
His Saints!

HOLY GOD

Holy God, we praise Thy Name,
Lord of all, we bow before Thee,
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore Thee.
[: Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign. :]

Hark, the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
[: Fill the heavens with sweet accord,
Holy! Holy! Holy Lord :]

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